

Rev. Louis P. Ledoux, D. D.

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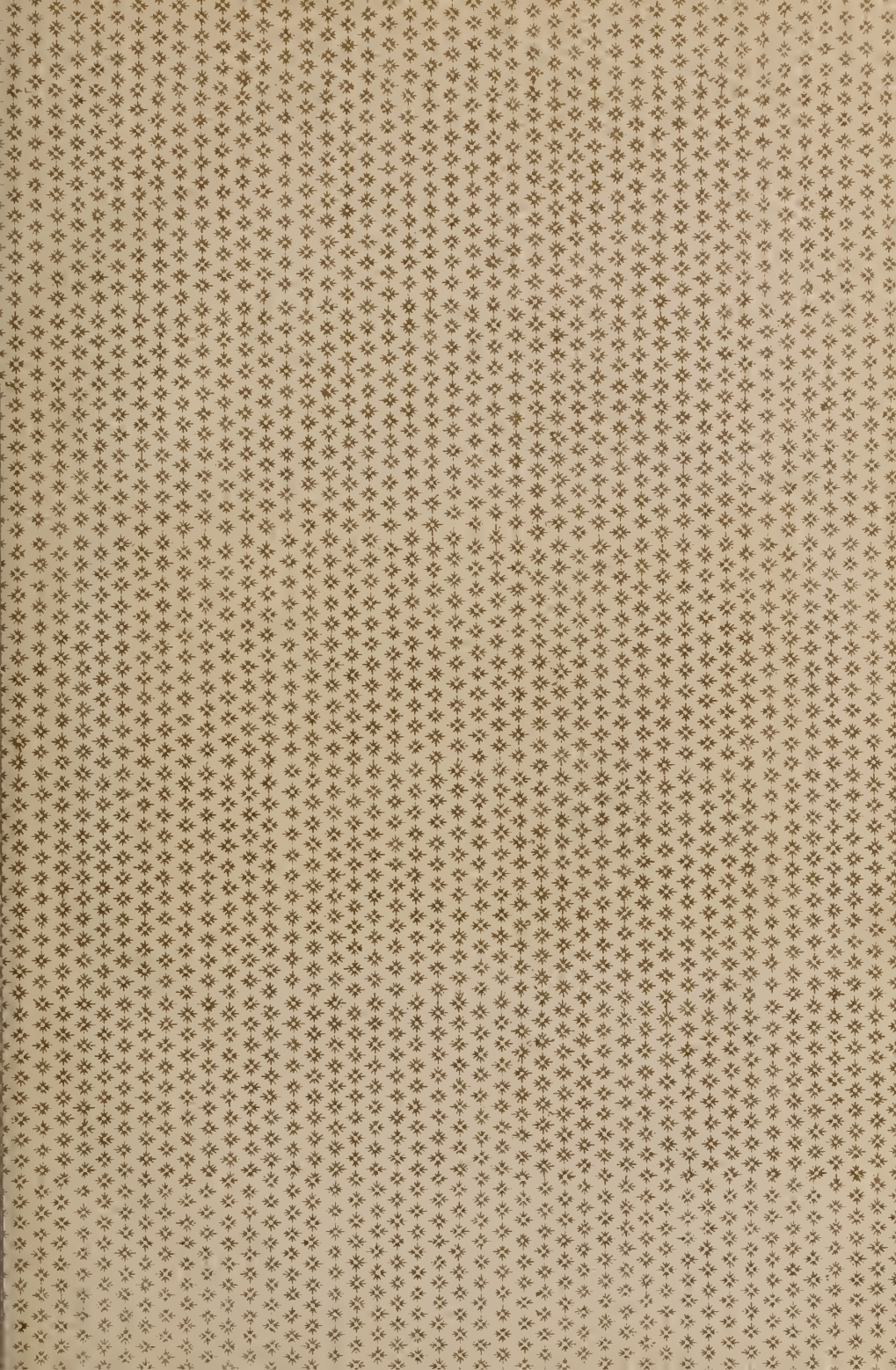
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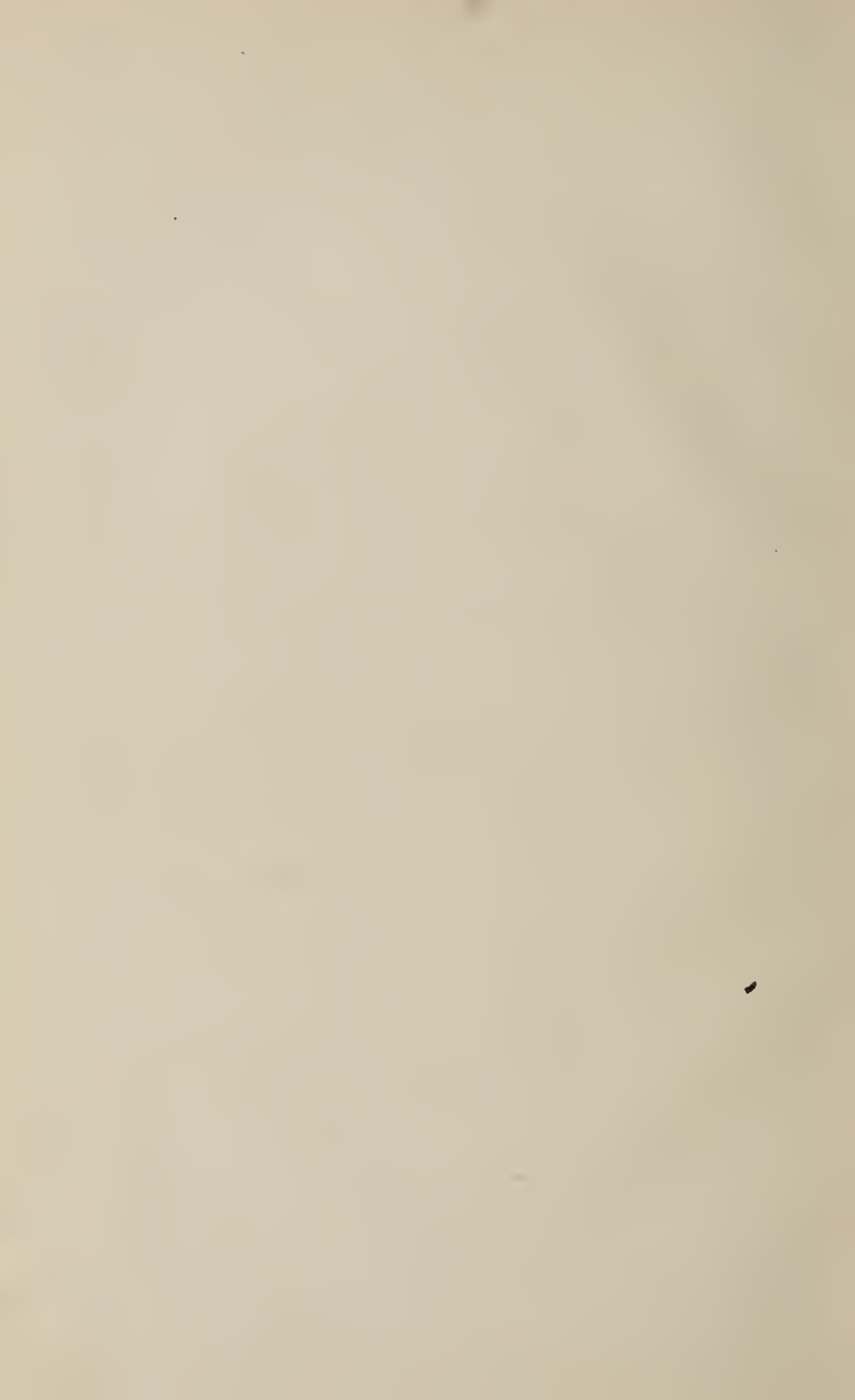
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BY
Professor Henry van Dyke, D.D., LL.D.

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Rev. Louis P. Ledoux, D.D.





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REV. LOUIS P. LEDOUX, D. D.

Katherine Reid Ledoux



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L. P. Leavitt

To my dear little grandson,

LOUIS V. LEDOUX:

It is now over two years since the grandfather, after whom you are named, and who loved you so, was called from among the hills of Cornwall unto the hills of God.

You were a little boy of five then, and although you remember his face, and something of his affection for you, in future years, if God spares your life, even this memory must fade. It has occurred to me to bind together for you these few letters and papers which will then serve to answer the question—who was my grandfather?

Your loving grandmother,

KATHARINE R. LEDOUX.

NEW YORK, December 31, 1887.

LOUIS P. LEDOUX

was born near Opelousas, Louisiana, June 8, 1822.

His parents were Eugene and Cèlèsie Pietre Ledoux. His father and grandfather were successful planters in the parish of St. Landry, with large sugar and cotton estates among the fertile prairies of the Vermilion River. The latter came from France, Department of Basses Pyrénées, early in the last century. Accompanied by two brothers he first settled in Canada, where they remained, but here moved to the more congenial soil and climate of Louisiana.

Louis Ledoux was one of the younger children, and pre-eminently a "mother's boy." He was rarely away from home, his early education being received from private tutors in company with his brothers and sisters. His boyhood was a happy one, with few wishes ungratified that wealth and affection could fulfil. Horses, guns and servants were at his command, and he had a large circle of young friends from neighboring plantations. Under the influence of a gentle mother he developed a sympathetic, religious nature, faithful to the duties of the French Catholic Church, to which all his relatives belonged. His elder brothers, leaving school one after another, married and settled on plantations of their own, but Louis' inclination was for a more studious life. An uncle, on his mother's side, was eminent at the bar of New Orleans; subsequently a judge. Influenced by his advice, as well as by his own inclination, his parents decided to give him a collegiate education, and fit him for the legal profession.

It was then the custom among Southern families of means to send their sons to Northern colleges, and so, on the 30th of May, 1840, Louis Ledoux left his Southern home to complete his preparatory studies at Lawrence Academy, Groton, Massachusetts, then in the zenith of its fame.

For a young man with his early training and surroundings to be suddenly transplanted from the sunny prairies of semi-tropical Louisiana, amid the rigors of New England life and climate, must have been indeed a change. Looking back upon this period of his life, he wrote in 1860:—

“The small, stony, side-hill farms; the rock walls; the poor stunted corn; but above all, the customs of the people, impressed me as very strange. Sunday of all days was to me most sad and uninteresting. From their manner of Sabbath observance, as well as their doctrines, as I *then* understood or rather *misunderstood*, them, I entirely dissented. Their Puritan standards I rejected *ab immo pectore*. I was brought up in a community whose members regarded Sunday as a fête—a day for visiting and amusements. Imagine my horror at the return of each Sabbath day in Groton! All amusements were suspended, all social visits interdicted. No vehicles tolerated on the streets, except to or from meeting; the front blinds were all closed. Even the dinner bell in my hotel was not rung on Sunday, and conversation was carried on in a suppressed tone. At nine, the church bells began ringing. At ten, church commenced, followed immediately by Sunday school; then a cold lunch, and service again at half-past two. I spent the time in being homesick and writing letters. Once I went out in the forenoon for a walk, but the looks of surprise and pain that met me from the windows of the good people, led me not to repeat the experiment, and I determined at least to respect their prejudices.”

He remained at Lawrence Academy until entering college, and it was there, under the influence of its respected and much-loved principal, Rev. E. H. Barstow, as well as of one of the teachers, that he took a step that changed radically

the whole current of his life. After a period of most searching self-examination, he united with the Protestant (Congregational) Church, and announced to his relatives that instead of becoming a lawyer, he felt called to become a minister of the Gospel. Nothing could have astonished or disappointed them more. He could not be dissuaded, but firmly adhered to his resolution. He felt that God had called him. His brothers' disappointment; his uncle's expostulations, and even his gentle mother's tears failed to turn him, and he went on with his concluding studies at Groton—his future life's work clearly defined. He gave up a career which, with his family's position and uncle's help, offered wealth and station in his native State, to prepare for the more humble, and often ill-paid toil of a Presbyterian minister. What the step cost him, only his nearest and dearest can ever know.

His father died; then followed the death of his mother, and with it the sudden cessation of financial aid from home. Undeterred, he entered Amherst College in the fall of 1844, supporting himself by teaching, and as tutor of French in college.

Graduating in 1848, he entered the Union Theological Seminary of New York city, whence he graduated in 1851.

In the summer of 1851 he was married to Katharine C. Reid, the youngest daughter of Edward Reid of New York, by whom he had two sons, Albert R. and Augustus D., born in 1852 and 1858 respectively.

After graduation, he at once commenced preaching, supplying the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church at Dobbs' Ferry. Although pleasantly situated here, his desire was to do missionary work, and declining a call to the permanent pastorate, he went to Newport, Kentucky, to upbuild a little

church but recently established. Placing this church on a firm, self-supporting foundation, he accepted a call to Monroe, Michigan, where for nearly three years he acted as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. There, on the lake shore, his wife and son, born in Newport, were attacked with chills and fever. Being advised that nothing but a decided change of climate would eradicate this disease, he accepted a call to the Third Presbyterian Church of Richmond, Va., where he remained until 1858. Then, called to the pastorate of the church at Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, New York, he accepted, and it was here that his best and hardest life-work was done. Beside his pastoral work, at this period of his life he was also busy with his pen, but usually in an unobtrusive, anonymous way, publishing a number of sermons, tracts, lectures and newspaper articles. A more elaborate treatise on "The Hypocrisy of Infidelity," in 1861, gained for him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the Indiana State University, whose Faculty saw and appreciated this review.

In 1865, after a pastorate in Cornwall of eight years, repeated attacks of a bronchial affection, with resulting loss of voice, compelled him to resign his charge and again to take up teaching, for which by education and experience he was well fitted.

In this occupation, without interruption, he continued until his last illness—a complication of heart-failure, with his old bronchial affection. He founded and maintained a successful collegiate school upon Cornwall Heights.

During his residence at Cornwall, the cruel wave of civil war swept over our country, and not even indirectly could he hear from his relatives in Louisiana. When peace was

restored, he journeyed South to see them. He found money; servants; lands had been swept away by the ebb and flow of conflict. His coming had been unannounced. One moonlight night he rapped at the door of his childhood's home. A window opens above, and a brother's voice asks in French: "Who is there?" Replying in the same familiar tongue, he asks if a stranger may have a night's lodging. The window closes, a step descends the stair, the front door opens, and before him stands the brother with outstretched arms and says, "Come in, my brother, this is the old home." With tears of joy and sorrow, childhood's days are gone over, the old affection renewed, and the story of all the long years of separation is told; then, with a great life's wish gratified, Louis Ledoux returned to his work, from which on September 30th, 1885, the Great Schoolmaster released him. What was the character and what the results of this work, let others tell in the following pages.

His funeral services were held on October 3d in the church at Cornwall, in which he had preached for so long, amid a large congregation of his former parishioners and pupils. The building was appropriately draped, and the services were conducted by the present pastor, Rev. Mr. Noble, assisted by Rev. Drs. Lyman Abbot, Snowdon and J. W. Teal, the latter, perhaps, Dr. Ledoux's nearest friend in the ministry during the later years of his life. He was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, near New Windsor, surrounded by the hills he loved so well.

STUDENT.

AMHERST COLLEGE, July 3d, 1848.

“Mr. Louis P. Ledoux has just completed his four year’s course of study in this institution. For two years he was employed to teach French (his vernacular) even to his own class.* We are glad to testify to his gentlemanly and amiable deportment, his irreproachable character, both moral and religious, as well as his talents and attainments.”

EDWARD HITCHCOCK,
President.

E. S. SNELL,
Prof. Math. and Nat. Phil.

W. S. TYLER,
Prof. of Languages.

“A college-life acquaintance of four years with Mr. Louis P. Ledoux, enables us, his classmates, to bear testimony to his many high attainments. We recall with pleasure his excellent scholarship, his courteous and refined manners, his unaffected geniality, and true goodness of heart.”

WM. C. DICKINSON,
W. S. SMITH,
S. F. MILLER.

LETTERS FROM CLASSMATES.

October 6th, 1885.

“Your letter telling me of the death of my dear classmate, Louis P. Ledoux, I find on returning home, and I have spent this evening with him ! I can bear testimony how worthy he was of the best love, as well as the fondest regard of his dearest friends.

Especially during the last year of our college life, and the one year we were together at the seminary at New York, was I drawn very close to

*His command of French was great, and his accent remarkably pure. When in Paris he preached in some of the French churches, and his hearers expressed surprise on learning he was not a native-born Frenchman.

him. I assure you the death of no member of our college society, nor of our class, will be more deeply felt than his. While to those of us who were admitted to his inner circle of friends, there comes a sense of personal loss and deep affliction. As he was the noble spirit around which we were privileged to group ourselves here, so, being the first to pass on, may we not hope that he still shall be our leader, and that we may again be together with him in the spirit world? 'And joyful shall our meeting be.'

He illustrated so beautifully by his life the Christ he professed and so dearly loved, we all can but rejoice that he is in His more immediate companionship now, and will enjoy Him forever." * * * *

"As a college student, your father was a rare approach to the ideal man. Southern birth and Northern training came to their best in him, uniting the courtly grace of the one section, with the noblest sentiments and aspirations of the other. With affinities and aptitudes all upward, he was faithful and fearless in the rebuke of the low and unworthy. Yet, withal, a sparkling playfulness and humor made him ever the most delightful of companions. Thus his fellowship was always ennobling and attractive. In class, literary, religious and social circles, he was a favorite representative man.

Few, if any, were the names that could be written above that of Louis P. Ledoux in the sum total of character, influence and college success."

October 9th, 1885.

"My eye has just fallen upon the paragraph in this week's *Observer*, announcing that my dear old classmate, Ledoux, has gone, and I shall see him no more in this world—you cannot tell what a pang it brought to my heart. Though I have seen him so little in these past years, yet I love him so much that I feel his loss deeply. It was something to know that he was in the world, and that I might go to him, and that again we might meet at old Amherst, but now that I shall see his face no more, it fills me with sorrow. I cannot tell one who knew him so well how good a man he was, but I can assure you that no man of our class claimed so much respect and affection from his classmates as did he.

He was a dear, good man with a large heart, whose companionship I shall never forget, and ere long I hope to follow on." * * *

October 11th, 1885.

"The *Observer* brings to us this week the announcement of your great affliction. * * * * * * * * *

I count it one of the great blessings and joys of my life that I was favored with such a pleasant, goodly and profitable fellowship. That grand and benign presence, that easy and courtly bearing, the richness, sweetness and the delightful manliness of his companionship, the depth and consistency of his Christian character, all conspired to make one proud, happy and blessed in his friendship. O what a bright and glorious vision is that of Louis Ledoux of our college days ! 'Lovely and pleasant' was he in his life. But he has suddenly vanished from the earth in the midst of his usefulness, while many, with long-blighted lives, still wear on !" * * *

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PASTOR.

CORNWALL-ON-HUDSON, Nov. 23d, 1887.

"You ask me 'for a few honest words' telling something of the work of Dr. Ledoux as pastor and preacher. The letters which you recently showed me could not say more of his success in Richmond and Monroe, but I can speak of his work in Cornwall, and of that only from personal knowledge.

His presence in the pulpit was so commanding, and his manner so earnest, that in any gathering he would secure instant attention when he rose to speak. His voice was flexible and well-modulated, and his gestures natural and forceful. In the pulpit his prayers, especially, always struck me as full of feeling. I have heard others say the same, and that he impressed them as having, in praying, the same faith that his whole life exhibited in action. His sermons always gave evidence of careful preparation, and abounded in apt illustration and appropriate quotation. But they were dignified and Godly. There was always a total absence of anything either sensational or amusing. In theology, he was evidently a firm believer in the standards of the Presbyterian Church, his New England training showing itself in his dealing with doctrinal questions, as well as those social questions ever recurring in the church—amusements, cards, dancing, intemperance, Sabbath observance, etc., etc. During his pastorate the membership of our church was more than trebled, and we raised, as the records show, over \$10,000 for religious purposes.

But, I venture to assert, that not so much as a preacher, but as a pastor and friend will the Doctor be remembered in Cornwall. He was always so full of love and sympathy and charity and self-denial, and so faithful to his flock, that his friendship was valued and his example respected by high and low, rich and poor.

I have paused here and read over what I have thus far written. It seems to me, who loved him so, so cold and inadequate that I know not what to do. Only God can sum up his work among us, and He alone can reward him for his patient, earnest, gentle life and labors. We could not adequately reward him, but yonder his face shall shine with the glory of those who turn many to righteousness, and he is now among the saints who through patient continuance in well-doing, have inherited the promises."

RESOLUTIONS OF SESSION.

"At a meeting of the Session of the Presbyterian Church, Cornwall-on-Hudson, held Thursday evening, September 30th, 1885, announcement was made of the death of the Rev. Louis P. Ledoux, the first pastor of the church, and the following action taken :

Whereas, It has pleased the Great Head of the Church to call from his place among us our beloved friend, counsellor and former pastor, Rev. Louis P. Ledoux, D. D.

Resolved, That while we mourn our loss, as that of a faithful and loving friend and fellow-worker for Christ, whose place may not be filled by any other, we must return our thanks to God for the precious heritage that is ours in his godly example, consecrated life, earnest and effectual Christian work, and frequent and faithful counsels, for nearly thirty years ; that we rejoice in the manifestation of the power and worth of the faith he cherished and taught, as shown in the life he has lived, and the respect and esteem so fully accorded him by all ; that we extend to his family the assurance of our warmest sympathy and our prayer that they may know the fullness of the consolation of the Holy Ghost, which he has so often ministered to the people we represent ; many of whom are his children in the Gospel of Christ ; and all of whom sorrow with them in the loss of him we have dearly loved.

Resolved, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of Session ; be published in the local and religious press ; and a copy be sent to the family of the deceased. And that special memorial services be held in the church, Sabbath evening, October 11, 1885."

TEACHER.

THE COMPETENT TEACHER.*

"He cannot be fully described. He should love his work and his pupils. His is a forcible character. In habits he is diligent and persevering; in judgment, well-balanced and prompt; in discipline, free from tyranny; in mind, symmetrical, conscious of supremacy and yet susceptible of development. He early analyzes the fidgetty set before him, and in his own mind separates them into distinct classes. He does not go into ecstasy over his success nor despair over his mistakes. Each day he tries to be a better teacher than he was the day previous, knowing that, 'teaching we learn.'"

EXTRACTS FROM SCHOLARS' LETTERS.

"It was indeed a great shock to me when I received the paper from my father, containing the notice of the passing away of the well-beloved master of so many years ago. You know how all of the 'old boys,' whose foundations in life were laid by his hand and shaped by his example, can sympathize with you in your great loss and affliction. This bereavement takes me back over nineteen years, to the time when, as a home-sick boy of less than thirteen years of age, the Doctor's kindly manner and gentle presence served to re-assure the trembling new boy, and make him feel that he had found, in the somewhat dreaded school-master, a new father and guide in the paths of duty.

Many times have I felt indebted to the Doctor for the ideas gathered from him, and it is my belief that to him and yourself belong the credit of developing whatever force of character I possess, as I consider the age at which I was under the Doctor's charge about as impressionable as any during the whole span of life."

*Found in Dr. Ledoux's school-room desk.

We all had a sincere love for the Doctor. As for myself, I shall always cherish his memory, and think with gratitude of all his kindness; nor shall I forget his noble traits of Christian character and example of Christian living of so much value to the boys under his care.

I have a personal interest, such as one might feel for a near relative, in thinking of the Doctor. He was all that a father could have been to the boys under his charge.

I shall not forget all his kind interest in me, nor can I forget that it was through his influence that I took a step which otherwise might never have been taken."

"Dr. Ledoux was always more to me than a teacher—he seemed more like a father, and I never can forget his kind counsels and watchful care over me during the three years I spent with him on Cornwall Heights. Those years will never be forgotten, and I rejoice to say that the advice and counsel I received during them, made that period a turning point in my life.

I could never say enough of all that has come to me while I was under Doctor's care, and hope only that the future may prove me worthy of it all.

Doctor, it seemed, was too good a man to be taken away. We, all of us, yes, the whole world itself, needed him, for he was a shining example of a whole-souled, true Christian gentleman. My love for him goes on increasing daily, for I feel that, though I have not lived up, as I should have done, to the excellent precepts he taught me, still I am a better man for having been under his pious care and guidance. I realize how *poorly* I *express* myself."

"If it is of any comfort to you, I know that there are many friends like myself, who will always remember the Doctor as a father, and who will guard his memory as that of one who taught them of a higher life. I shall never forget that it was mainly due to the 'Doctor's' influence that I first thought to connect myself with the church."

LETTERS FROM ASSISTANT TEACHERS.

“ I went first to Cornwall, just escaped from boyhood and colleges, in the Fall of 1869. I was under-teacher in the school on ‘The Heights.’

Dr. Ledoux’s tall, erect and manly figure is vivid in my mind now, and no man ever had a kindlier face. He loved animals. He loved trees. He loved boys, and it was the great comfort of his life that his work might still go on among the splendid fellows that came to him, after he was obliged to leave the ministry. His spirit drank in both strength and repose from the striking and beautiful scenery around him.

I remember vividly now after the lapse of more than eighteen years, his relations with the boys ; how kind and genial, how ready in sympathy, how thorough and exact in his instructions ; how earnest for their moral and religious welfare. He was always devising healthful means of recreation. The boat-rides, the bee-hunts, the rabbit-trapping, the excursions into the mountains, the candy-pulls, were some of the means continually employed by him to keep the recreation hours of the boys joyously and healthfully employed.

His heart followed them after they had left his home and his instruction. It was a ceaseless joy to him that many became active and leading Christian young men. To this very end were his energies directed, to make of the young men around him devout and strong men. The tenderness in family worship, the love in the home with which the boys were surrounded by both the doctor and his wife, have made strong the heart of many in years afterwards.

His teaching was delicate, discriminating, painstaking, inspiring. But that was characteristic of all his work ; it bore the mark of his conscience and his culture.

The distinctive mark of the Great Teacher was on his heart. That mark was love. That was what made him a teacher sought for and chosen from many for the care of boys.

Many men can preach, but few can teach. Love taught him a thousand virtues. It guided his mind in subtle and sympathetic contact with the timid but inquiring youth. The heart guided his course in the most delicate and difficult undertaking in the world—the training of youth ; and that was how it happened that he made no mistakes. I liken it to

an inspiration of God, by which his whole being, in that noble office of teacher, was quickened, informed, and guided in unerring lines in his great work. He used sometimes to regret that his ministry was cut short, but I think that long before God called him, he understood that the humbler service done for the Master was not less grand or honored of Him, than the more conspicuous one of preaching.

To the young he made the world look more beautiful. He added to their gifts out of his own courage and confidence and faith. They will walk hard paths with a more springing step, and meet trouble and misfortune with braver hearts; and all for him.

I cannot refrain from adding—and many will give kindred testimony—that much of the inspiration which has supported me in arduous and prolonged labor in the same calling, has had its source in the influence of his beloved life.”

* * * * “I wonder whether you really understand how much I appreciate the good I received at the hands of Dr. Ledoux the year I was with you. I oftentimes look upon it, not as the year in which I taught, but as the one in which I finished my student life in a most peculiar way. I frankly recognize the many ways I am indebted, and I want to pay the humble tribute of saying that I am to-day a better Christian —far—for the year and its work, from the peculiar way in which he influenced me. I have a more elevated and correct view of the ideas which should control men in their every day life from the example he set each day in the earnestness and sincerity with which he threw himself into the school. One thing was to me marked. I have often mentioned it to mother, saying, ‘I do not believe the Doctor or Mrs. Ledoux could take more interest in the welfare of these boys if they were their own children.’”

* * * * “It was with the deepest regret that I found it impossible to be among those who, on Saturday, paid the last sad tribute of respect to all that was mortal of Dr. Ledoux. This sorrow I felt all the more keenly from the fact that through my association with him as his assistant teacher for two years, I had come to know him and to love him for the many noble qualities which adorned his life. His quickness to supply the temporal as

well as spiritual wants of those who stood in need of assistance, his Christian patience and forbearance, his thoughtfulness for others, made him the best of neighbors and friends.

Of the dear Doctor it may be truly said that he rests from his labors and his works do follow him. Those whom, as pastor, he watched and tended, rise up and call him blessed ; and all those young lives which, with infinite pains and loving tenderness he did so much to fashion, will daily honor his memory.” * * * *

* * * * “I know that it must have been a great trial to him to leave the ministry, but God had other work for him to do. It would be impossible to measure the influence that he will still continue to exert through the lives of those whose minds and character his hand has done so much to form. The deeds of a good man do indeed live after him. I, myself, feel that I owe him a debt of gratitude for two of the happiest and most profitable years of my life.

When he left you I have wondered if you did not say to him as I have heard you say so often, ‘Au revoir.’* You might have said it as truly then as ever.”

And thus, briefly, the story of an earnest life is told by others. But none of them could lift the veil from that inner home-life—too sacred for tongue or pen. The tenderness ; the faith ; the gentle patience ; the self-forgetfulness ; the inspiring courage ; the unselfish, generous love that never faltered or wavered or diminished !

Standing yet on this side of the river, there is one, at least, who thanks God for this life, and who looks across with increasing yearning for the day of blessed reunion.

K. R. L.

*As a matter of fact, the day before his death, when “aphasia,” a symptom of the disease, had appeared, after struggling for a long time to say something to his younger son, he motioned for paper and pencil and wrote slowly, with trembling hands, these familiar, but then so significant words, “Au revoir.”

MEMORIAL SERMON

BY

REV. GEORGE P. NOBLE.

•

A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST.

A sermon in memory of the Rev. L. P. LEDOUX, D. D., preached Sunday, Oct. 4th, 1885,
by Rev. GEO. P. NOBLE.

JAMES i. ; i.—*A servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Pre-eminent among the characteristics of the good and Godly man, in memory of whom we meet to-night, was that which is indicated in the text. His story was told you, briefly, at the funeral. It has been repeated at greater length in our village paper. It is right that I, his pastor, should now tell it to you again, not as something new, but as something that is both good and pleasant to hear, and that should come to us full of instruction and helpfulness, for it shows us how one who is “a servant of Jesus Christ” may live.

He was born at Opelousas, La., June 8th, 1822, and there spent his early years. The fair sky and genial climate of his Southern home were not more radiant or protecting than the parental love and the brotherly and sisterly affection that surrounded him. He was the youngest son in a wealthy and loving family. All that anyone could wish was his. In him centered much of the pride and hope of his parents' hearts. They meant him for the “law,” and, no doubt, saw bright visions of social and political preferment for him, in which they took great delight. What was there that might not come to one so born and cared for?

In his seventeenth or eighteenth year he came North to complete his schooling, and entered the Lawrence Academy at Groton, Mass. There he was met by the Holy Spirit of God, and led to see Jesus, not only as his Saviour, but as the Saviour of the world. So impressed was he with the revelation of the love of Christ that he then received, that he dedicated himself to the Gospel ministry, and at once entered upon the service from which he never swerved, and in which he never faltered for more than forty years. I do not go too far when I say that it both cost him all he had and made him all he was. That he might carry out his new purpose, it became thenceforward necessary that he should support himself through college and the seminary. He assumed the burden and accomplished his task with the same brave cheerfulness that we have seen and known in other things. I know whereof I speak when I say the burden was not light or the work easy. His ministry began at Dobb's Ferry, in this State, where he won the hearts of the people, and might have stayed for many years had he so chosen. But his heart was full of fire ; full of grand enthusiasm to preach to those in greater need and with fewer advantages. He wanted frontier mission work. So he was sent to a little struggling church in Newport, Ky., then near the border. He found them worshipping in an upper room. In a few years he had them housed, and lifted to a place of strength and power. Then he was ready to go on. This time he went to Monroe, Mich. Here his ministry was brief. His wife and baby sickened under the malarial influences of the region, and for months were at death's door. Though the church offered to send them away for a whole year's rest, if that would keep him with them, it seemed to be a question

between them and the church. He was the servant of God ; he believed God had sent him there. And so he hesitated. While he yet debated what was his duty, his orders came. The Third Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Va., who had never seen his face or heard his voice, and only knew him by report of friends who dwelt among them, called him to their pastorate. He could not question that this was the voice of God ; nor could his Western people, though they parted from him most reluctantly. Some of the friendships founded in the Western field have continued to his death. Part of the cordial welcome that I met from him when I came here, he did not hesitate to say, was due to the fact that my uncle was one of the Session of that church, for whom he had a life-long love. The world is small, and our lives are interlaced with others far more and oftener than we dream.

He went to Virginia at a very trying time, and to a hard and painful experience. It was at the beginning of one of the struggles, in the Presbyterian Church, that had slavery for their causes. Most of you can remember nothing of it ; perhaps hardly knew of it at the time, for it was confined mainly to that one Synod. But, boy as I was, it made a deep impression upon me, because my father and his nearest friends were members of the Synod and participants in the struggle. It resulted in a schism in the church. We, in Washington, were able to hold our Presbytery right. But, in Richmond, Dr. Ledoux stood almost alone. With him the choice was to break up his new-made home ; to part from the people who had shown such a signal confidence in him, and to come North ; or else, to remain among those to whose views of right and wrong he had been early

trained, but with which he could no longer agree. It was the voice of conscience, to him ever as the voice of God. His choice was made. He came North, "not knowing whither," and in His good providence, God sent him here.

He was pastor of this church seven years and a half. He found it with less than forty members. He left it with over one hundred. He found it struggling for life. He left it with its strength established and its success assured. In leaving it, he acted from necessity and not from choice, save as it was his choice always to do his Master's will. His voice failed him. He gave it rest, but renewed effort showed that it could not be depended on. So, in the Fall of 1865, he resigned his pastorate and, most reluctantly, laid down his work. Laid it down, however, only to take it up again in another form.

Of his place and work as a teacher, another is to speak to you to-night. I shall anticipate what may be said only this far. Dr. Ledoux's purpose, in all his ministry, was to lead souls to Jesus Christ, and to train them to efficiency in the Master's work. When he changed from the church to the school-room, there was no change in the aim and purpose of his life. He was still "the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." The ideal that he always held up before the boys committed to his charge, was that of manly Christianity. His hope, his prayer, his effort in their behalf, was that they might see in the Son of God the Saviour of their souls and the pattern for their lives. And what he taught, he lived. He believed God's word with the implicit confidence that a child puts in its father's statements. What the Bible said was true. From it there was no appeal. So much was settled in his creed, beyond all doubt. Quoting

to me the saying of a noted theologian, now deceased, "that if his conscience and the Bible led him in different ways, he should follow conscience," he said, "To me, such sayings are absurd and wicked, both because of the doubt implied. A quickened conscience, guided by prayer and filled with the Holy Spirit, cannot lead one contrary to the word of God." And so, with the love of a son in his father's house, and the deference of a servant to a master, trusted and revered, he did his work and lived his life.

The words of such a man had mighty power. Pupils, neighbors, friends, all loved to hear him speak; all listened eagerly for what he had to say. Many have been the words that have come to wife and sons in these last days, ascribing "the conversion," "the love of Christ," in some cases "all that is good," in the writers, to the influence and teaching of this good man. One says that he had been in the mazes of doubt and unbelief, but the remembrance of what religion had been in, and made of, Dr. Ledoux, had brought him through to an established and unshaken faith. These are very precious words, and full of comfort to the afflicted ones. And we who knew him, know that they were well-deserved.

Dr. Teal told us of the loving welcome that he met when he began his ministry in this church, of the promise of sympathy and help Dr. Ledoux made him, and how fully that promise was redeemed. Let me add my testimony to that then given, for I might use almost the self-same words. There is a tradition of men that the very worst of all possible parishioners is an ex-pastor of the church. It is not making an invidious distinction, or casting a slight on anyone else, to say that no pastor ever had a more sympathetic, loving and considerate parishioner than each of his successors found in

Dr. Ledoux. He was always ready to be counted first for self-denying service, and last in everything else. His care, lest he should ever seem to come between pastor and people, was constant; and as great at the last as at the first. No church ever had a wiser, warmer friend than he has been to this. While yet the fullness of his strength remained, he was always in his place at public worship; and no one else was absent whose presence his thoughtfulness and help could secure. Only a few days ago I was told, by one of the parties concerned, of how, week after week for a long time, he called for and brought to the young people's meeting, four young girls who, otherwise, would have been without escort or conveyance. And so through all his life. There was no good thing that could not safely count upon his sympathy and cordial aid. No place where he was needed where he was not found, when health and strength, and the work that he was called to do for Christ permitted. Was there ever a man more thoroughly or rightfully respected in a community than he was in this? Was there ever one who either deserved or received more of the esteem and confidence of all who knew him? "A real good man." How often we have heard the words, in this connection, in these last few days, and from how many kinds of men! The church is weaker, the community poorer for his loss. We all feel it so to-night.

He was what God made him. It was the faith he had in Jesus Christ; the service that he had rendered to his Lord, that gave him the strength, tenderness, purity and power. Without his religion he was but as other men. By the constraining power of the love of Christ he was lifted to the place he filled, so that we now lament "a prince and a great

man fallen in Israel." To me the lesson of his life is this : The worth of Christianity to the soul, the ennobling, elevating power of our faith ; the dignity and manliness of being " a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." We shall miss him from his place among us, but shall not his power and influence live on, while we follow him as he followed Christ ?

ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST ALONE.

SERMON BY REV. DR. LEDOUX.

John 6: 68. Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

The question of the text is the strongest form of an assertion. In its real import, it is not an inquiry, but rather the *result* of inquiry. Peter and the other apostles of our Lord had sought eternal life in many ways. They had tried the world and that had proved a failure. It had not satisfied their cravings after eternal life. They had tried the service of sin, and found that instead of obtaining life as a result, "*the wages of sin is death.*" Some of them had committed themselves to the Scribes and Pharisees, and by them had been led astray. They had resorted to their own schemes, and sought to work out for themselves a righteousness of their own, but to their bitter disappointment, found that they made no progress in *that*. They had gone to Moses and he had pointed them to another. They had gone to John the Baptist and he pointed them to One who was coming after him—the true light—One whose shoe's latchet he was not worthy to unloose. They had finally gone to Christ himself, and here they had at last found what they had in vain sought elsewhere. From His lips they at last heard "the words of eternal life." And now, with all this experience gathered from so many *failures*, so many abortive attempts, how natural the answer which is here given to the question of Jesus in the verse preceding the text: "THEN SAID JESUS TO THE TWELVE, WILL YE ALSO

GO AWAY? THEN SIMON PETER ANSWERED HIM, LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE."

With the same tentative spirit let us, my friends, now spend a few moments in search of peace, of salvation; let us, if possible, find *eternal life*. In pursuit of this salvation I find myself ignorant, bewildered, unhappy. I am conscious of a lack of real comfort and true peace in all my joys. I long for a satisfaction which I have never yet found in living to eat, to drink and to enjoy this world. I find many teachers ready to aid me in my search; to direct me in my inquiry, I go to one, for instance, who willingly undertakes to direct me, and he sends me

I.—TO NATURE AND HER PRECEPTS. He tells me that if I attentively study her laws and conform to them, I shall not fail to find the bliss for which I sigh. Anxious to find this peace, I go to Nature as directed, and study her precepts and listen to her voice of instruction. I enter her courts; I ascend her lofty mountains, and there, possessed with an idea of the greatness and goodness of Nature's God, I am in no way benefitted. I have only, so to speak, approached nearer to an infinite God, whose laws I have broken, whose authority I have rejected. I descend without peace. I enter Nature's laboratory below, and there I behold her processes. There is the crystal receiving its shape, its angles and polish—the diamond its beauty and hardness. I leave this, awe-struck, and impressed with a feeling that God is here—this is holy ground, and *I* am a sinner. The power, wisdom and goodness of God, as here seen, are indeed calculated to lead me to repentance, and yet *I* have no penitent feelings. I ramble through the valleys and over

the fields. I find the flowers gorgeously arrayed, painted in every variety of color and shade. Their fragrance floats in the air and meets me. All teach me the *eternal power* and *Godhead of the Deity*. All Nature teaches me that I am a fallen being in the midst of these displays of grandeur, wisdom and goodness. And here I find my disease rendered worse rather than better. *I am a sinner*. As such, I ask Nature to save me—to comfort me in my deep agitation. I press Nature to tell me what to do with a long catalogue of sins which I produce before her. I urge her to tell me how these can be blotted out. She in vain points me to her oceans, lakes and rivers full of water. All the cleansing properties of all the water of the world cannot make my heart clean; these sins are of so deep a dye that nothing within the power or possession of Nature can bleach them.

Finding myself disappointed here, I turn with sadness to another teacher. Seating myself at his feet, I ask him in tears *what I must do to be saved*. This one, after hearing my statements, bids me

2. TURN FROM NATURE WITHOUT TO NATURE WITHIN ME. He tells me that man's moral nature is not so deranged, not so degraded, not so fallen as to be past *self-recovery*. He tells me that if I look within I shall find there some spark of the original fire that burned upon the altar of man's heart, though it be in a smothered condition. His original righteousness is not clean gone forever. The moral image of God is not entirely blotted out in him. He appeals to the finer sentiments of our nature. He bids me watch closely and detect my abhorrence of the grosser and more debasing evils into which the less refined in society plunge. He asks me if I am not shocked at such exhibitions

of depravity, if I do not instinctively shrink from them. He thus flatters me and tells me that I am unnecessarily alarmed at my sins. They are only those errors and delinquencies which belong to all men in this world of imperfections. He tells me that I have self-love and that I will surely, on the whole, do what my interest demands. In short, he tells me to look within me to find out what I must do to be saved.

For a moment I find myself somewhat relieved by this flattery. But it *is only for a moment*. I ask myself what if it turn out that in being honest I am secretly following a maxim of this selfish world, viz.: that "*Honesty is the best policy*." I ask myself, if naturally disposed to do right, why did that mother, from my earliest infancy, watch over my morals with such anxiety and even with tears? Why was there so much of law in that household? Why such strictness in demanding obedience? Why such hard thoughts in boyhood when my wish was denied, when my purpose was crossed? May we not be indebted to the moulding influence and discipline of parents and teachers for that moral conduct, that exalted idea of honesty and all those upright views of life which render men pleasant, useful and respected members of society?

I find, then, that it turns out that it is not *on account of*, but *in spite of*, my original disposition, that I am what I am. Nor dare I say what the amount of influence pious people and the preaching of the Gospel have upon me to keep from committing those grosser deeds of iniquity from which I now shrink. Besides all this, I feel still that I am a sinner. I am "weighed in the balances" and am "found wanting." I am once more disappointed. I find the class of feelings to which I have been directed to be insufficient to guide me

from one victory of sin over another. It is unsafe to trust to them. I turn, then, from myself and this guide, and resolve to try again, and thus I repair to another teacher.

3.—This one, wholly mistaking my case, bids me “GOVERN MYSELF BY THE SAYINGS OF WISE MEN,” to conform to the prudential rules of those men of broad common sense and experience who have left their thoughts to the world, but especially to the youth of the world. “Follow these maxims,” says this one, “govern yourself by these precepts and you will find no occasion for uneasiness. Prosperity will attend you here, and beyond ‘the debt of nature’ which you will pay at death, nothing will be demanded of you in the future.” But here again I am doomed to disappointment. I am a *sinner* and looking for eternal life. This teacher, instead of probing my wounds, has sought to heal them from without, and this effort only tends to increase the inflammation within. These maxims, when followed, will indeed exert a happy influence on the character. The maxims of a Franklin, when followed, will indeed point out how to secure and keep health; how to live with economy, but this is not to the point. The issue is not met. The maxims, in conformity to which I shall appear well in society, secure a robust body, keep a sound mind and obtain wealth, are not “the words of eternal life” to which the Apostle refers in the text. The aphorisms of men, however wise and useful to guide us in the present life, will not give the seeker after “eternal life” true peace. This is, therefore, a *cheat*, plausible indeed, but, nevertheless, a *cheat*. Alas! And must I be disappointed *everywhere*? Is there no hope for me? “Yes,” cries a fourth teacher,

4.—“LOOK TO THE MAJESTY OF YOUR OWN

REASON. Pin your faith to no man's sleeve, follow your own divine reason and banish your fears in regard to the future. You have been deceived; like many other unfortunate ones, your education has been conducted under the pressure of a fanaticism which ever imagines itself just on the verge of an endless perdition—a fanaticism which gluts itself on the awful idea of a God who is to judge this world at some appointed day in the unknown, untried future. An education conducted under the authority of an ancient Book, containing the morbid philosophy, the poetic effusions and the history of men of a dark and barbarous past age; dreamers who, like some in every age of the world, supposed themselves under the inspiration and guidance of a God."

This teacher, in short, assures me that the sooner I shall discard these silly notions, the better it will be for me—the sooner will I obtain peace. To convince me of the wisdom of this advice, to encourage me to follow the majesty of reason from the example of others, he places in my hand a manual containing the names of all great infidels, their bold and independent course of reasoning and the results to which they have arrived without the aid of Christianity or Christianity's Bible.

But here, in the outset, we are startled by the *great diversity of opinions* which they hold, while we are often very much puzzled to understand what they really mean.

Let us turn, first, to the history of *English infidelity*, and select some points. Here we find, for example, the distinguished Hobbes proving to us that there is no God; contending that whatever man *desires*, he has a *right* to appropriate to himself. Thus, with one stroke, he not only sweeps away Christianity, but he also sweeps away all rights

among men, and his reasonings carried out, would bring into one general mass of ruin the whole framework of society.

Following him comes another name of some note, but one who, by no means, agrees with Hobbes in regard to the existence of a Deity. Shaftesbury teaches, indeed, that there is a God, but discards the idea of Christianity as a divine remedial system. Upon the fundamental idea of a God, these two infidels take diametrically different sides.

Notice, next, the great champion Hume, with his subtle metaphysics. Although teaching the existence of a God, he also teaches that God is an *infinite vegetation*!

We turn to France and there we find two of her most distinguished infidels also disputing among themselves. Here is Voltaire, on the one hand, expressing himself doubtful in regard to the existence of a Deity; denying positively the existence of the soul after death; sneering at the doctrines of the Bible, as preposterous and childish,—on the other hand, Rousseau, whilst denying the divine origin of the Scriptures, maintains that they contain an elevation of thought and a purity which can be found in no other book. Contrary to Voltaire, he believes in a God and a Providence.

Shall we next turn to Germany? Here we find ourselves entering an inextricable labyrinth. Guided by his reason, one teaches that God is everything we see, touch, eat and drink! Another great philosopher starts with the astounding proposition as the basis of his system of philosophy that "*I is I!*" "*Everything is what it is, it is either I or not I.*"

Another lays down the proposition that "*entity is nothing; and that the unity of entity and nothing constitutes existence.*"

Another, after a long and tedious process of reasoning, arrives at the conclusion that "*something and nothing are*

the same." All these discard the Scriptures, and come to these conclusions by the light of *reason*. You can judge now of my perplexity to decide on the course I am to pursue. Whom shall I follow of these teachers? This is indeed the question to decide, and decide it I cannot without having some doubt that I may be wrong in doing so. Besides all this, while I am conscious of being a *sinner*, I am also looking to a death-bed upon which I must very soon be laid, and as I read of the closing lives of very many of the infidel's who have lived and died, I am most painfully impressed with the fact that infidelity seems to be illy adapted to give her disciples true and sustaining peace in the hour of death. If their remorse of conscience, their shrieks of despair, their curses and imprecations, are to be taken as the legitimate preparation for death which infidelity gives men, I certainly shrink from becoming one of its votaries. Here is not the boon which I seek. Where then *is* it? Ah! I find a fifth teacher

5. WHO SENDS ME TO GOD'S HOLY BOOK. But what do I find here? I find a law that reproaches me and heaps curses upon me. It arrays my sins before me and makes them appear exceeding sinful. I ask for mercy at its hands; it answers that "*the soul that sinneth it shall die!*" It declares that God is just, and will by no means clear the guilty. It drowns my hopeless and piteous cries by peals of thunder. When I approach the awful mount, it sends forth its black, curling smoke, and I quake and stand back. My troubles increase, my prospects become more gloomy than ever before. I find myself tossed upon a sea of agitation without a pilot—without a star. O, the horrors of such a condition! All teachers to whom I repaired have

misdirected me, and now this last teacher, the Law of God, *curses* me! Ah, but thanks be to God, this last teacher, after all, is "the school-master that leads me to Christ." Whilst thus riding on the raging sea, almost driven to distraction, a star arises to guide me to the port of peace, that star is the Star of Bethlehem. With irrepressible joy I exclaim, "I have at last found true peace!" All I want I find in this blessed Saviour. In Him I am *complete*. He is to me *wisdom*, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*." Let the Law now say, "thou art a sinner and shalt pay thy debt or die." I can say, "THIS IS A FAITHFUL SAYING AND WORTHY OF ALL ACCEPTATION, THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS." "He was bruised for my iniquities, wounded for my transgressions, and with His stripes I am healed." Do I feel that I need repentance? "HE IS EXALTED AS A FRIEND AND A SAVIOUR TO GIVE REPENTANCE." Does the question turn upon my righteousness? "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to *everyone that believeth*." Do I want an assurance that I shall never be disappointed—never be moved if I trust him? I obtain that assurance in the precious promise that I shall be "KEPT THROUGH FAITH UNTO THE DAY OF COMPLETE REDEMPTION." In Him I find a *kind* and *constant* and *true* sympathizer in all my troubles and bereavements. In Him I see a light that enlightens the dark and gloomy tomb; for He who is "the resurrection and the life hath brought life and immortality to light." *He* has indeed "*the words of eternal life*." In Him all doubts are removed, all difficulties settled, all darkness dispelled, all fear taken away, all despair exchanged for hope, all trials rendered tolerable, all burdens rendered light, all guilt pardoned, all wounds healed, all disease cured,

all uncleanness washed away, all future dangers averted, all sighs repressed, all groans hushed, all tears dried, all joys sweetened!

O precious Saviour! Thou art indeed our light, our hope, our salvation, our joy. Thou *alone* hast the words of eternal life! "Be Thou our *all*, our *theme*, our *inspiration* and our *crown*, our *strength* in age, our *rise* in *low estate*, our soul's *ambition*, *pleasure*, *wealth*, our *world*, our *light* in darkness and our *life* in death."

My dear unconverted friends, *how long will you strive after true peace where you never can find it?* Ought not ten, twenty, or it may be forty years of this fruitless experimenting, to suffice? Why not go directly to Christ for words of eternal life? Never will you find it short of Him. You will be restless until you get upon this rock.

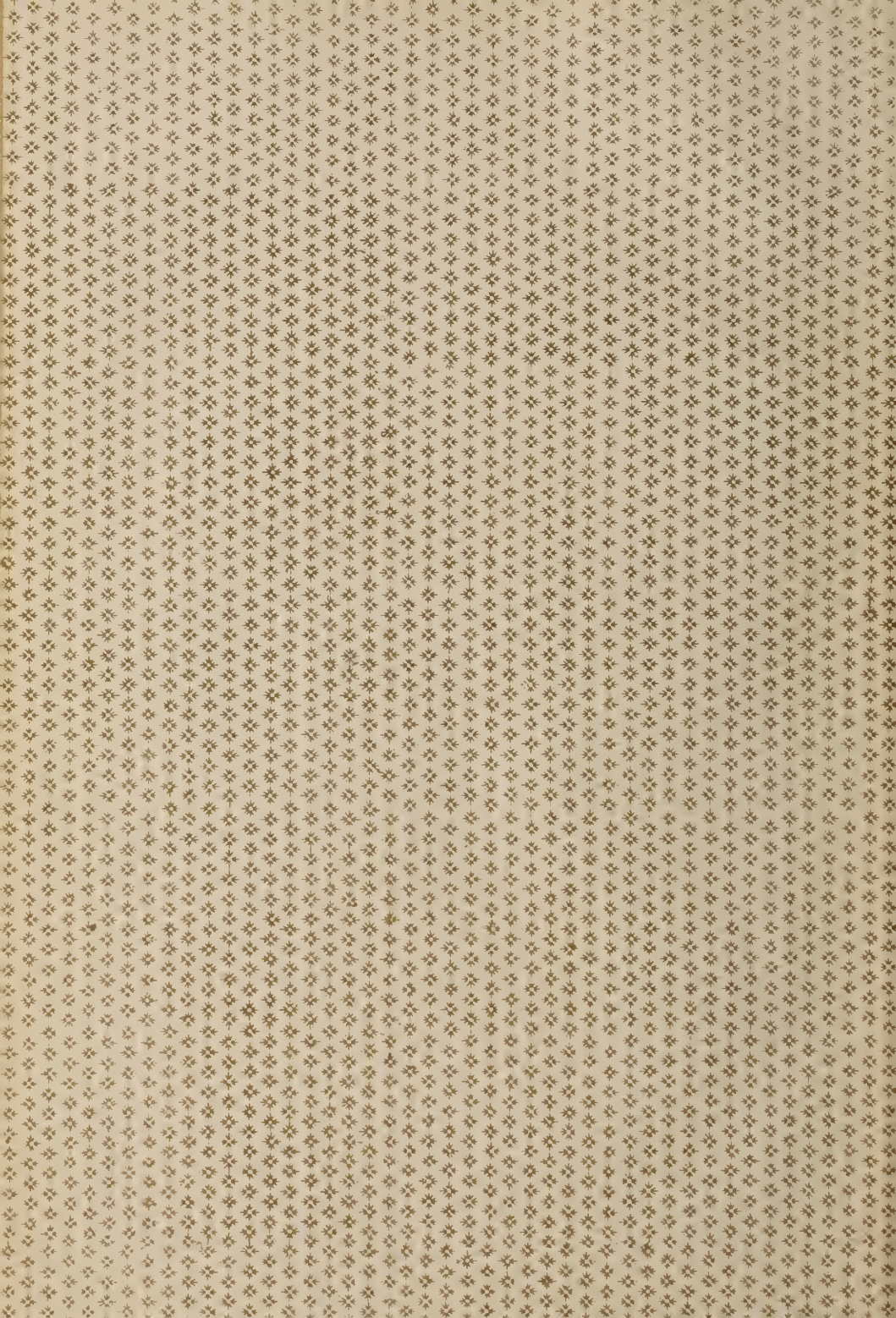
Christians! what think ye of Christ this morning? May I not safely call some of *you* back to Him? Are there none here who have in some degree ceased to realize that Christ *alone* has "the words of eternal life?" Are not many of you, before me, roaming after the joys which you are sensible of needing? Return then to your Jesus at *once*. Stay not on account of sin—because burdened with sorrow. He Himself says this morning: "COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST." Whatever be your trials, your difficulties, your doubts, your fears, come to Jesus and you will find Him as ready as ever to bless and comfort you. He is ever the same wise, good and sympathizing Jesus.

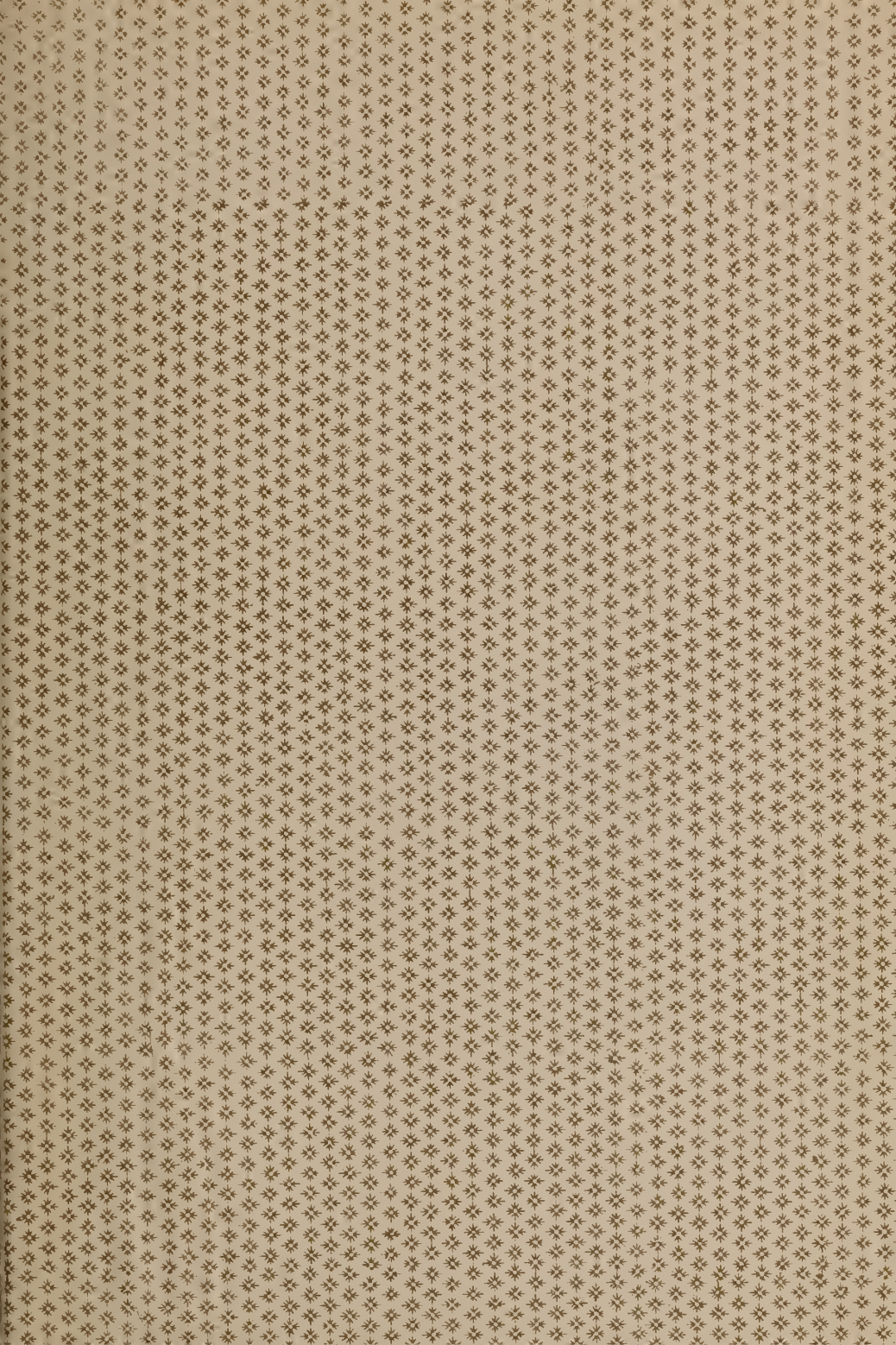
“When our purest delights are nipt in the blossom ;
When those we love best are laid low,
When grief plants in secret her thorn in the bosom,
Deserted ‘to whom shall we go?’

“When error bewilders, and our path becomes dreary,
And tears of despondency flow ;
When the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is weary,
Despairing ‘to whom shall we go?’

“When the sad, thirsty spirit turns from the springs
Of enchantment this life can bestow,
And sighs for another, and flutters its wings,
“Impatient, ‘to whom shall we go?’

“O blest be the light which has parted the clouds,
A path to the pilgrim to show,
That pierces the veil which the future enshrouds,
And show us, to whom we may go. ”





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